

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A method capable of stably drawing an optical fiber with a gas-seal system and an apparatus for implementing the method. The method produces an optical fiber 40b by drawing the optical fiber preform 30 by heating and softening the
5 leading-end portion of it while feeding it into a drawing furnace 20. The drawing furnace 20 allows a gas 15 to blow against the optical fiber preform 30. The inside of the drawing furnace 20 is sealed with a seal ring 14U and a shutter 14L located at the top and bottom portions of it, respectively. While the gas 15 is fed, the inner diameter of the seal ring 14U is adjusted according to
10 the diameter of the optical fiber preform 30. Consequently, even when the preform diameter varies, the clearance between the seal ring 14U and the optical fiber preform 30 can be maintained constant, thereby enabling a stable drawing operation.